Communities and Transport Scrutiny Meeting: 25th November 2024

FOURTH ANNUAL FLOOD RESILIENCE REPORT

Report of the Director of Place Management

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. In April 2021, the first Stockport Council Annual Flood Resilience Plan was produced. It described the various roles and responsibilities of the Council with regard to flooding and flood resilience including its roles as the Lead Local Flood Authority, Highway Authority and landowner; both of greenspace and working with Stockport Homes with its significant housing assets. The work in this area supports the council's overall approach to climate change via Stockport Climate Action Now strategy.

1.2. The second report of September 2022 provided an update on activities since April 2021 and this update continues that process, along with the third report from last year.

1.3. 2010 The Flood and Water Management Act conveyed new responsibilities to Stockport Council and other local authorities as Lead Local Flood Authorities. Additional duties were placed in 2014 to the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Local Planning Authority

1.4. The Council, and other bodies can act and has powers under the Act as a Risk Management Authority to do works, but these are not duties applicable as a Lead Local Flood Authority.

1.5. In June 2023 Greater Manchester Combined Authority published the Integrated Water Management Plan in draft. A tripartite agreement is now set up with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, United Utilities and the Environment Agency. This enhances our existing partnership work across all bodies dealing with water. It is intended to support the changes happening to focus on sustainability, greener infrastructure, and climate change. The plan is attached as an appendix (1) and sets the priorities for the future Greater Manchester work and the creation of a joint central team who will work closely with local authorities.

1.6. In 2024, the Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act is proposed to be enacted in England, as it is in Wales, this may impose more duties and potential ownership of Sustainable Drainage Systems on local authorities. Officers are preparing Business Cases to help us understand this; however, no details have been announced. It is not clear what the new Government's approach will be as this influences planning and development.

2. ROLE AS LEAD LOCAL FLOOD AUTHORITY

2.1. There is currently an approved and published Local Flood Risk Management Strategy that sets out how the Council manages flood risk under the duties assigned to it as Lead Local Flood Authority. Although the strategy is reviewed regularly and the Council is working on delivering the objectives and attributing specific action to those objectives, it is not the intention of this report to alter that but support those objectives through a resilience plan.

AGENDA ITEM

2.2. A fundamental aim of the strategy is that Stockport Council embraces and supports its role as Lead Local Flood Authority, and this means taking the lead in helping with infrastructure development and re-development, all while working with other bodies in dealing with flood risk. The Council wants to encourage, and wherever possible, enforce current thinking and guidance, and be able to provide improvements through working better together in terms of supporting communities to help themselves.

2.3. The main objectives of the strategy are:

- To better understand local flood risk and make the best use of availableinformation in order to better manage flood risk to people, businesses, property, infrastructure and the natural environment.
- To reduce the potential impact and costs of flooding in the Borough.
- To ensure resilience of local water bodies and drainage assets.
- To ensure appropriate development in areas of flood risk.
- To develop a collaborative partnership approach to flood risk management and cooperate with other Risk Management Authorities and key stakeholders working across catchments.
- To assist communities in understanding information on flood risk andsupporting themselves.
- To encourage, support and provide flood risk management which seeks toenhance and protect the environment.

2.4. That report also describes the role of the Council as a Highway Authority. This includes the identification of the resilient network and maintenance of highway assets, regarding highway drainage including the maintenance, repair and improvements to its assets including gullies, culverts etc. The focus on this is to provide safe use of highways rather than managing flood risk. Highways provide opportunities to store and manage water.

2.5. The Council's management and use of its greenspace is also a key element of the overall approach to flood risk management; including the management of watercourses, reservoirs, etc. and its greenspace provides opportunities to store and manage water.

2.6. The Council's response to/and investigation of serious flooding events in Stockport, is both a highway issue and as part of the Council's approach to dealing with emergencies. These events can impact residential or business properties and there have been significant events in most recent years particular in 2016 and 2019. In 2021 and 2022, although homes were not flooded, unusual Winter high saturated ground and very high-water levels in the River Mersey resulted in flooding of adjacent areas.

3. SECTION 19 FLOOD EVENT REPORTS

3.1. The more serious flooding events in 2016 and 2019 have required the production of Section 19 reports, with the aim of investigating the cause of what happened and making a series of recommendations. It is intended that the Annual Flood Resilience Plan will provide a summary of overall progress against the key actions in such reports.

3.2. The recommendations from these reports and the Council's existing flood strategy

could be summarised under the following headings:

- Wider climate measures.
- Data analysis and understanding of flooding patterns in the borough.
- Improvements to maintenance of assets including drainage.
- Managing flood incidents.
- Flood risk mitigation interventions – both upstream and at flooding locations.
- Investigations.
- Ensuring new development appropriately manages flood risks.
- Supporting community resilience and communications.

3.3. Like many parts of the country, Stockport has suffered from several flooding events in recent years. This increase in severity and frequency of flooding hasmeant that there is a greater need for additional resources to prepare and mitigate for, as well as preventing, flooding wherever possible. When the Council was given the responsibility of the Lead Local Flood Authority in 2010, the government allocated a grant of £11,000 to cover the council's additional expenditure.

3.4. It is recognised that in recent years there has been a significant change to the demands placed on the services, and that what were once considered one-off events that needed to be responded to, now appear to be periodic severe flooding events.

3.5. The purpose of this and future reports are to provide updates and additional information to the Council on how we are progressing within our resources and current allocations.

4. WIDER CLIMATE ACTION NOW INITIATIVE

4.1. The Stockport Climate Action Now Strategy provides a broad overview of the Council's approach to mitigating the impacts of climate change, all while reducing the Council's carbon impacts. The work undertaken as part of annual flood resilience plan will contribute to this agenda.

4.2. As part of this plan, there is a commitment to improve tree planting and utilising greenspace to support its aims. One potential opportunity is to utilise greenspace areas to hold water in times of severe weather, and a project called'Parklife' has identified several potential sites where these features could be located. One of these sites was Diamond Jubilee Park in Cheadle, and as part of the advanced funding for the Cheadle Town's Fund a water holding area has been created. A further scheme in Lavington Avenue Playing Fields, Cheadle was successfully completed this year. The areas are part of the park and can be used for recreation most of the time but should provide a water storage facility in very wet weather.

4.3. An initiative is being explored to work with other environmental charities who are engaged with schools with regards to measures, such as tree planting and climate education, to also offer support to schools to promote School Sustainable Drainage Systems. Water can be managed and used to provide school amenity, biodiversity, and education tools.

5. GENERAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1. In addition to Stockport Climate Action Now, measures have been taken under the following headings and activity planned. In the past years, significant progress has been made with operational elements of flood management, which are able to be controlled with stronger management. These include data analysis, maintenance of assets (including drainage), emergency flooding planning, resident resilience information, communications and incorporating the environment and flood mitigations in the development of our borough plans. All these areas are on a much stronger footing than at the time of the 2019 flooding and continue to improve.

5.2. We have moved more into project phases, based on the strong connections and contribution the Council has with partners. As direct result of the Council's engagement both United Utilities and The Environment Agency have identified key catchments as pilot schemes within Integrated Water Management Plan in Stockport, and we have been successful in bidding and implementing schemes to assist.

5.3. Over the past two years our teams have now set up regular meetings with key partners outside projects to discuss risk areas and mitigation schemes to determine possible future measures.

5.4. We have been successful in working directly with environmental charities and in some cases the charities have delivered schemes and attracted more funding to support them.

5.5. The focus is moving to cheaper and more nature-based interventions, rather than the hard engineering solutions we have used in the past. Hard engineeringis frequently more expensive and often unsustainable. The latter does not provide the wider environment benefits such as helping improve water quality, biodiversity, and amenity. It also often passes the problem downstream rather than addressing the fundamental cause of flooding.

5.6. We are encouraging more nature-based solutions and surface-based control,as opposed to buried assets and subterranean tank solutions.

6. PARTNERSHIPS

6.1. In partnership with other Risk Management Authorities, officers have actively engaged with and encourage cross partnership collaboration to work on flood risk, as well asknown (or potential) issues. Key partners include:

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority,
- Environment Agency,
- Greater Manchester Flood Risk Officers Group,
- United Utilities,
- Upper Mersey Catchment Partnership,
- Integrated Water Management Plan.

7. PROGRESS THIS YEAR

7.1. Mapping, Reporting and Engagement

7.1.1. Officers continue to develop and enhance the Council's approach to recording data and being able to analyse it, while also continuing to record asset information centrally when information is received from inspections and

investigations. The “Report A Flood” system now directs the key information to the most appropriate teams and officers; to either provide advice, assist or investigate.

7.1.2. Stockport has many culverted watercourses with complicated ownership responsibilities. The programme of surveying and mapping these assets is currently paused whilst we focus on responding to the issues identified and reports of emerging urgent issues on other culverts. Support and advice are provided regarding how culvert owners can develop ongoing maintenance plans for their assets and where necessary enforcement action may be required.

7.1.3. De-culverting as much as possible is positively encouraged as this assists in restoring natural flows and can enhance the environment to help in biodiversity and water quality. Culverted watercourses present a major maintenance liability and create unnecessary flood risk. As such, a list of over one hundred sites have been identified in open spaces, where de-culverting and other nature-based interventions could assist water management. Landowners and land managers will be spoken to as the opportunity arises to consider whether de-culverting would be suitable in their location.

7.1.4. In recent years, officers have provided Natural Flood Management Schemes across the borough and have been successful in bids through Local Levy Funding in Greater Manchester. These have been supported by the Environment Agency and we are looking at further funding through United Utilities and are actively working with them. Officers are also working with the Environment Agency to access funds through their future funding opportunities.

7.1.5. We continue to support Greater Manchester Combined Authority in helping to develop and write a Highway Sustainable Drainage Systems guide. This is where good examples are shown on highway schemes, to encourage highway designers to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems in all designs, rather than the conventional buried asset solutions.

7.1.6. A Town Centre Development Guide is being published that with our input and support focuses on and encourages sustainable development using source control for water and better mechanisms for capturing and managing water. A greener emphasis is now a green and blue approach.

7.1.7. We are currently driving, working with and assisting Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Integrated Water Management Plan to pre-emp the further significant developments around Stockport Town Centre and to provide a Water Management Strategy for these developments ahead of the individual developments that would traditionally rely on use conventional piped drainage solutions and direct flows into the river. This holistic strategy will support the developments and provide cheaper long-term solutions.

7.1.8. A study, known as Parklife, has been undertaken to identify potential areas of green space in parks etc. that could be utilised in flood risk management schemes. Potential projects could include the creation of swales, reedbeds, ponds etc. to store and manage water more efficiently in these locations. Since the study was completed the council has been seeking funding to implement these proposals.

7.2. Catchment and Strategic Approach

7.2.1. In recent years there have been significant flooding episodes; both nationally and locally, which has led to research into appropriate interventions. There is a

growing awareness that more mitigation needs to take place across wider catchment areas, to capture and slow the flow of water, as opposed to just focussing on mitigations at the flooding location. This is still a developing area with academic and practical demonstration projects still being supported. Good practice is being shared via national agencies e.g., the Environment Agency and regional flood forums for Members and officers.

7.2.2. We recognise that the catchment approach is now considered the most viable and effective mechanism. Through comparatively smaller scale measures, over a larger area, significant change can be achieved. The strategy is developed slowly, but interventions although small, can be frequent and deliverable.

7.2.3. Flood mitigation schemes can include replacement of natural habitats, 'Slow the Flow' approaches, changes to farming and land management techniques. In more urban areas, rain gardens, permeable driveways, tree pits and water storage areas can all assist in managing water. This all aligns with Stockport Climate Action Now. Providing green and blue spaces assists with reducing heat island effects.

7.2.4. Natural erosion where possible allows water, streams, and rivers to follow their natural routes, all while creating storage and slowing water down. Conventional thinking was to try and straighten and engineer rivers, to use the land more effectively. However, that damages the environment and speeds up water, thus reducing the ability of self-cleansing. Meandering rivers are being reintroduced in many parts of the country, which have been proved to assist soil and agriculture.

7.2.5. Areas of wetlands and moss land have been previously disregarded, often being drained and filled in (and that would also include ponds). Such areas are now used to both store, and hold up water significantly, but also provide major advantages for biodiversity and carbon capture. We are working with partners to identify lost wetlands or provide more in the borough. In addition, we want to find ghost ponds and record these.

7.3. Planning Applications

7.3.1. Officers advise the Local Planning Authority and developers on flood risk and more importantly on sustainable drainage (Sustainable Drainage Systems) being incorporated into planning applications. Sustainable Drainage Systems is now mandatory in Scotland and Wales, and it is expected to be formally legislated in England this year.

7.3.2. Our guidance, and advice for developments seeking approval for planning, is now more focused on removing unnecessary volumes of water from sewers that can assist in reducing flood risk and water pollution. The use of manageable and sustainable techniques within the location of the developments, are usually based on Source Control and accessible surface-based features.

7.3.3. Approximately 260 planning applications per year are assessed, and almost all applications will need Lead Local Flood Authority interventions to seek alternative approaches to include more sustainability. The value of this to the Council is that every development and redevelopment is taking measures to reduce flood risk to others, by not being able to simply pass the water elsewhere and ensuring it is managed, slowed, and treated.

7.3.4. There is significant development, planned development and redevelopment within the Town Centre and we are working with developers and partners to ensure that even within high density urban areas Sustainable Drainage Systems are used effectively. We encourage surface and nature-based solutions that treat and manage the water within the site. An example being the green/ blue roof for the Stockport Interchange at Viaduct Park and the recent proposals for Stockport 8 using raingardens and highway Sustainable Drainage Systems. We are also working with the Integrated Water Management Plan team so that larger areas of development have a holistic regional approach to aid swifter development and better outcomes.

7.4. Projects and Schemes

7.4.1. Micker Brook and Ladybrook Catchment.

7.4.2. The Council has supported the Upper Mersey Catchment Partnership. External funding has given the group the opportunity to capture ideas of measures to support and enhance the catchment around Ladybrook and Micker Brook, which will include flood mitigation. This programme is overseen by the team and has been developed to deliver information and guidance on the catchment. This involves a series of projects conducted by the partners, with the aim of this programme being to improve the water environment for people and wildlife. This would be done all while slowing water flow and reducing flood risk in many hotspot areas. There is a programme of work taking place in Lyme Park including creation of 40 leaky dams[1]. We were also successful for grants to extend and enhance areas in Bruntwood Park and Cheadle Golf Club; to provide more Natural Flood Management on two of the tributaries to Micker Brook. These were complete as of March 2024.

Leaky Dam at Bruntwood Park

7.4.3. Brookfields Park Project, Cheadle

7.4.4. The Quick Win funding was sought to open up the highway drainage in an area off Broadway and build a natural green overflow system (soakaway) that will hold back and slow the flow of water during a large rainfall event, reducing the risk of flooding of properties on Wilmslow Road, Brookfield Crescent and Broadway; and mitigate build-up of water backing up the system from the

[1] Barriers made of natural woody materials are laid within water channels and allow normal base-flows of water to pass through. When flood flows are higher, they create an obstruction to reduce the flow.

Micker Brook, which would cause further flooding. This ties in with sustainable transport work in this location and the park is being used to drain water from the highway and we have managed to collaborate constructively on both projects. This was on site in July 24.

Highway Drainage Overflow System at Brookfields Park

Swale in use at Brookfields Park

Attenuation Pond at Brookfeilds Park

Swale at Brookfeilds Park

7.4.5. Ladybrook, Bramhall.

7.4.6. Council officers continue to work with the Environment Agency to try to understand and manage the risk of flooding episodes. The Environment Agency last year completed a review of the fluvial flood risk along the river. The data does not significantly change any aspects of the flooding expected, and this year. The Environment Agency will carry out further optioneering that may also tie in with the Micker Brook pilot scheme. Officers have considered the potential for a localised scheme around the Brookdale Cub and Theatre site, as well as other measures in Happy Valley.

7.4.7. The Micker Brook Place Based Pilot Project.

7.4.8. United Utilities is creating schemes in the region and have chosen to work exclusively on the pilot with the Upper Mersey Catchment Partnership that we support, which indicates our successful partnership. United Utilities has selected rivers for special attention, these being: the River Tame, River Bollin and Micker Brook (that all affect Stockport). The majority of the upstream catchment work lies outside our borough, and so we have a watching brief. However, we do play a key role in the working and steering group for Micker Brook working with the Environment Agency, United Utilities, and other partner to identify key deliverables, and our work in supporting and delivering schemes has been on-going.

7.4.9. Schools Hill Project.

7.4.10. The Council has been successful in putting in bids for funding to support schemes along the Micker catchment, with more leaky dams in Norbury Brook. A provision of a wider wetland and 12 leaky dams in Bruntwood Park, with more leaky dams were complete last year as well as more work around the watercourse in Cheadle Golf Club. These were complete as of March 2024.

7.4.11. Poise Brook Project.

7.4.12. Poise Brook catchment has had much attention in past years. In 2022 the Environment Agency was persuaded to take a lead on a wider catchment project, and also as a result of that, United Utilities has also chosen this as another Place Based Pilot Project collaborating with the officers involved. The Environment Agency has recently announced that a leading consultancy in

flood risk have been appointed to assist the project, which is being assessed and planned over 5 to 10 years. In 2022, as part of the Poise Brook catchment, the Council bid, won and completed works around Cown Edge in Offerton, installing Leaky Dams and secondary channels. More bids have been submitted and been approved for Leaky Dam works in Torkington Park, which was identified as part of the Parklife. These were complete as of April 2024.

Leaky Dam at Torkington Park

7.4.13. Chorlton Brook Cheadle (Lavington Avenue).

7.4.14. Chorlton Brook is a Main River that is mostly culverted and is shown as one of the highest flood risk areas in the region, with over three hundred properties at some risk. Some past interventions and work by both parties, have limited the impact and internal flooding is not as frequent as other areas. However, it is clear the risk remains, so we have identified some potential mitigation measures to assist with storing and slowing water before it flows into the culvert, causing it to surcharge. One scheme has been submitted to the Environment Agency and approved to provide swales and detention areas near to the usually dry watercourse in Lavington Avenue playing fields, which was complete as of March 2024.

Attenuation ditch at Lavington Avenue

7.4.15. Romiley Flood Mitigation Project.

7.4.16. Works have been undertaken to facilitate the investigation of the Victorian culverted masonry watercourse at Dye Lane in Romiley. The culverted watercourse runs from the centre of Romiley near Guywood Lane, to the River Goyt and it will be necessary to examine the whole catchment prior to assessing options to mitigate the flooding. The flood team have been working with a consultant using the Environment Agencies grant processes to help understand issues in the District Centre and investigated which measures will assist. A report is being finalised with some high-level recommendations and we are working directly with United Utilities to identify suitable interventions Discussions are ongoing with landowners in the vicinity with a view to securing their support in order to then identify funding to undertake work.

CCTV imagery from Dye Lane, Romiley

7.4.17. Cringle Brook / Black Brook, Reddish and Heatons

7.4.18. The Environment Agency has launched a project for Cringle Brook that mainly looks at flood risk in Levenshulme and Withington, outside Stockport. However, it is Black Brook that supplies Cringle Brook and although there is no significant concerns along Black Brook in Stockport and no driver for schemes in Stockport we have identified a potential scheme to manage Black Brook and take some water out of sewers around Meadows Road Park. We are hopeful that we can consider a scheme under the A6 Integrated Water Management Plan, Local Levy and the Environment Agency's Cringle Brook Project and to also apply for United Utilities Green Recovery Funding. This would be the first time we are considering multiple bids for a scheme. There may a potential for Nature Recovery funding.

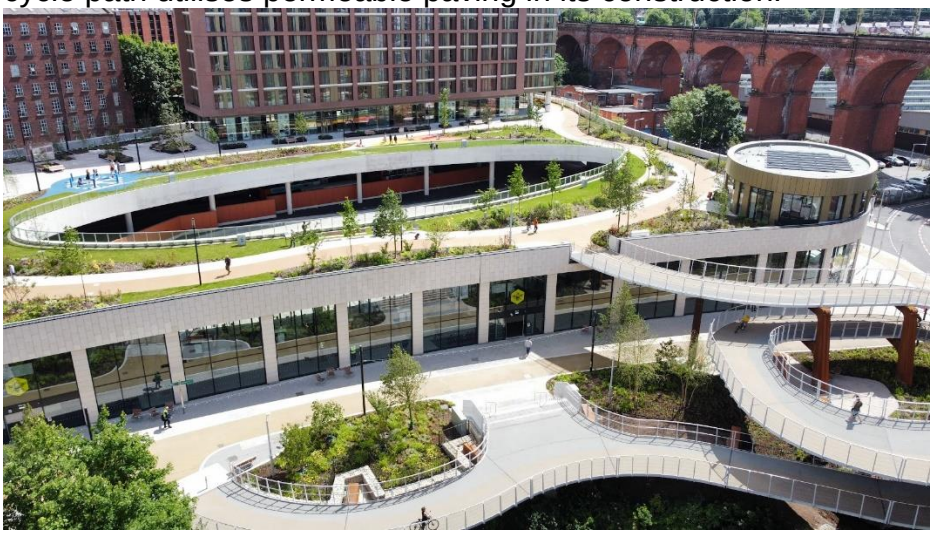
7.4.19. There are issues that are affecting the A6 near McVities and Crossley Road. Black Brook is culverted prior to the A6 and the open section of the watercourse is used for fly tipping and that blocks the culvert. It is prone to surcharge and occasionally floods the junction. Our highways teams carried out extensive survey and clearance with some success and are negotiating with the landowner to seek a solution. It is being considered by the Environment Agency that they use their powers to install a Trash Screens ahead of the culvert to help avoid blockage. United Utilities currently have an overflow to combined sewers downstream of the A6 so during heavy rainstorms events the flood water can also contain sewage. There are limited opportunities in this urbanised area, but we are working to support and advise

United Utilities and assess opportunities to take more water out of the combined systems to help reduce the flooding and pollution.

7.4.20. The road under the railway bridge is significantly lower that the surrounding areas and tends to flood. This is not directly attributed to poor highway drainage or lack of maintenance. There is a complex interaction of siphoned watercourses, sewers and relation with sewer outfalls and Cringle Brook itself in Manchester. The council has investigated these issues and developed a report to explore and set a series of recommendations to share with partners. The Council have already negotiated with Manchester City Council to do some remedial work in Cringle Park on the watercourse.

7.4.21. Stockport Interchange

7.4.22. Stockport Interchange was developed jointly between Transport for Greater Manchester and Stockport Council it has been designed to include sustainable blue and green water management features including the blue roof and planting in the park which utilises the water stored within the roof, and highway sustainable urban drainage features. New landscaped areas have been provided in the Park, Bridgescape, and beside the river. The riverside cycle path utilises permeable paving in its construction.



Interchange and Viaduct Park

8. UNITED UTITLITIES

8.1. United Utilities operate with a 5-year programme determined with OFWAT and each Investment Programme is called Asset Management Programme (Asset Management Plan). Asset Management Plan 8 is due to commence is 2025 and there has been a change in the approach and considering more blue/green solutions to help flood risk and partner working. However, Asset Management Plan8 has an Accelerated Programme to review and help mitigate sewerage spills to our rivers. Asset Management Plan8 will be the largest investment programme and provide capital delivery of schemes stated as £14bn.

8.2. The Accelerated Programme does however focus on the quicker solutions and what we would call grey measures as an immediate plan to reduce spills to around 10 per year. These measures tend to be the traditional buried storage solutions, and this do not provide other benefits aside temporary storage of storm water and

sewage. It does not remove that water and it still goes to treatment. They are expensive and have to be maintained and monitored at ultimately the costs of the water rates payers. It is hoped that once the acerated programme is complete we can work with United Utilities to identify greener and more sustainable solutions.

8.3. United Utilities programme for the Government's Water Industry National Environment Programme currently consists of schemes to Wastewater Treatment Works and Consented Sewer Outfalls to rivers in a range of locations across Stockport.

8.4. In Stockport United Utilities are currently preparing storage solutions at sewer outfalls at Brookfield Park, Cheadle along the Micker Brook, Travis Brow Stockport on the River Mersey, Lumb Lane Bramhall, at Carr Brook (Micker and Ladybrook Catchment) and Poynton Pools off Chester Road in Hazel Grove (Micker and Ladybrook). These tie in with the flood risk issues and the mitigation projects that the Council is helping to steer.

9. ENFORCEMENT

9.1. Although the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Environment Agency have powers and limited duties to ensure drainage is fit for purpose and working correctly, this is an extremely costly and time- consuming process. Officers therefore take a pragmatic approach and support residents to find solutions in the first instance utilising their knowledge and engineering expertise. However formal enforcement action is taken where necessary where the scale of the problem for neighbours is significant and the owner has been unwilling to work with the Council to resolve the situation.

10. CIVIL RESILIENCE PLANNING.

10.1. Officers are aware of the number of significant flooding incidents that have taken place in Stockport in recent years. We have worked together to update the Emergency Flood Plan for the Council and partner agencies. Joint discussions and exercises have been held and each major incident has been reviewed for lessons learnt. Each week the Flood Guidance Statement, issued by the Flood Forecasting Centre (FFC) is distributed to key council officers (andthose on call), to provide any intelligence about potential weather-related incidents.

10.2. Improved information is in place meaning officers are aware of locations vulnerable to flooding and can provide targeted information warning of any risks with advice about mitigation measures. For example, there is a new river level gauge in Poynton.

10.3. The council has developed much improved information and self-help guidance available to residents both in advance of and during flooding incidents. This information is reviewed following each incident. Details can be found via the attached link. Flooding - Stockport Council.

11. SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS APPROVAL BODY

11.1. It is expected that Central Government will confirm that the Lead Local Flood Authority also becomesthe Sustainable Drainage Systems Approval Body. This will be more onerous on the Council in respect to duties but should attract additional fees from development. A strategic business case is being developed to highlight the changes and impact of this to the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority.

11.2. In addition to our current advisory role, it is possible that the Sustainable Drainage Systems Approval Body will have to take ownership and manage some Sustainable Drainage Systems features, such as new ponds and swales.The other substantial change will be that officers will be responsible for site inspections and enforcement.

11.3. Planning legislation reform means there is uncertainty regarding the future implementation of the Sustainable Drainage Systems Approval Body process.

12. COMMUNICATION AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS.

12.1. A number of guidance documents have been completed, including a Developers' Guidance Document on flood risk and drainage. These are being issued on request, whilst we are trying to establish how this can be better accessed. This is to assist the Planning Application process. It is hoped that a Design Guide can be developed to support the Local Plan.

12.2. Information in a leaflet style format has been developed to advise Watercourse riparian owners of their legal duties and the Council's role. Guidance notes have also been drafted on a variety of topics.

13. OTHER FUTURE PRIORITIES

13.1. Whilst there has not been any local significant flooding in recent months flooding risks remain. Supporting residents and providing advice on how they can maximise their resilience is a key priority for the Council. In addition, we have continued to work on a variety of physical and modelling projects.

13.2. List of Future Projects

13.2.1. *Poise* Brook Catchment Project

13.2.2. The Environment Agency is leading on the long-term project (2022 – 2027) for Poise Brook, working with United Utilities, Council officers, and possibly the Mersey Rivers Trust, all while utilising consultancy support. The project will investigate issues relating to flooding in Hazel Grove and Offerton (mainly around Hazelwood Road and Bean Leach Road), to identify potential solutions which could be the subject of future funding bids.

13.2.3. Hazel Grove Golf Course

13.2.4. As part and as a result of the Poise Brook Project we submitted a bid to the Environment Agency that was unsuccessfully due to high demand. However, we will continue to look for funding for this project.

13.2.5. Romiley Flood Mitigation Project

13.2.6. This study will continue through the year, with the intention of looking further at the upstream areas higher in the catchment.

13.2.7. Micker Brook and Ladybrook, Bramhall

13.2.8. Officers will continue to work with the Environment Agency to develop a better understanding of the issues impacting on this area and possible mitigation options. They will also continue to seek funding for any identified mitigation measures.

13.2.9. *Chorlton Brook, Cheadle*

13.2.10. The Environment Agency has this earmarked for future programme and funding at the Council's request.

13.2.11. *Woodbank Park, Offerton*

13.2.12. Officers are working up a scheme to assist the park with drainage by managing the water more within the park. It is intended to explore and develop a bid through United Utilities' Green Recovery Fund with the intention to remove water from drains and sewers.

13.2.13. *Arkwright Road, Marple Bridge*

13.2.14. Culverted watercourses and sections of canal overflows are believed to be connected to United Utilities Combined Sewers and this adds to the pressure in the system experienced during storms we will explore how that water can be better managed.

13.2.15. *School Sustainable Drainage Systems*

13.2.16. The Flood team are advising on an initiative to help and develop schools promote and install retro Sustainable Drainage Systems in fields to take water out of the system. The benefits to the school would be to provide a happier and more pleasant space for teachers and children. This would provide a facility for education and help with the heat effects. City of Trees are launching a programme to identify and speak to schools, and it is anticipated that together we can connect with schools to consider blue and green solutions as we have already undertaken at Greave Primary School and Werneth High School.

13.2.17. *Climate Action Now*

13.2.18. The team will actively work with the Climate Action Now team to identify engagement and involvement with other parts of the council and work to provide support and interventions to help nature based solutions.

14. RESERVOIRS IN STOCKPORT

14.1. *Stockport Owned*

14.1.1. In response to the Toddbrook Reservoir Dam collapse in Whaley Bridge and the possible potential impact, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Affair has notified all undertakers of large reservoirs, that all large reservoirs require a robust and current on-site flood plan. The Direction allowed 12 months from the date of instruction (22nd April 2021), to develop a plan and a further six months for that plan to be operational. To follow the requirements of the Direction and the Reservoirs Act 1975, the Council needs to develop and maintain flood plans for the following reservoirs:

- Reddish Vale.
- Etherow.

14.1.2. Plans have been developed and become operational. In association with this a package of improvement measures have been identified and are being implimented.

14.1.3. Whilst the reservoirs at Alexander Park are not considered to be large reservoirs, the Council has always treated them as such because of their location and has plans to develop a plan over the coming 2024/25 period.

14.2. Private reservoirs in and around Stockport.

14.2.1. There is one privately owned reservoir within Stockport at Roman Lakes, Marple, who will also have had to develop their own flood plan.

14.2.2. There are also a number of reservoirs in adjacent areas which could affect Stockport residents if issues occurred, including: Whaley Bridge, Lyme Park and Disley.

14.2.3. Officers are continuing to collate a list of all water bodies and their owners within Stockport, to assist in dealing with potential future incidents. With the initial list to be completed by Summer 2025.

15. HIGHWAY DRAINAGE

15.1. The current approach to highway drainage and gully emptying is risk based, aligning with national guidance on asset maintenance. The gully cleansing programme areas have been updated on the Stockport Council website.

15.2. The routine, scheduled approach to gully emptying enables more frequent visits to be made to the known higher risk areas and the data collection system allows the identification of more complicated issues which can then be programmed for further investigation.

15.3. At the Council Meeting on the 22nd February 2024 it was agreed that an addition £160,000 would be utilised for drainage cleaning with a view to purchasing a new gully cleaner to be funded by the Councils Invest to Save reserve.

15.4. The gully cleansing machines are reaching the end of their life and the process of replacing them with new machines has commenced.

15.5. Funding within the transportation capital programme allows a limited number of larger highway drainage improvement schemes to be funded each year utilising the maintenance allocation.

15.6. Further details of how the council prioritises gulley cleansing can be found in the Highways Gully Cleansing Operation Plan.

15.7. There are a number of roads under railway bridges in Stockport which have been lowered to allow higher vehicles to pass underneath. This creates potential drainage issues that are difficult for motorists to appreciate the depth of. More recently we have undertaken work at Hulme Hall Road and Crossley Road to improve the existing drainage conditions. Work has also taken place on Lingard Lane near the bridge. At Crossley Road we have installed automated warning signs and are now undertaking a more detailed study of the factors involved in highway flooding.

15.8. Work continues to develop solutions for flooding issues on the A555. Since the road was first opened, maintenance to the storage tanks has been undertaken which has returned them to their original capacity, remedial works to the ponds have been carried out and we have replaced the pumping station that was in place on the original stretch of the A555. Negotiations with the contractor and the Environment Agency are continuing with a view to undertaking further improvements in the near future.

15.9. Guidance notes are also being developed for Highway Sustainable Drainage Systems by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

16. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

16.1. The highway drainage improvements and flood risk mitigation schemes are funded utilising grant funding, and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement maintenance funding.

17. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

17.1. The Council utilises the relevant legislation to investigate flooding, undertake flood mitigation schemes and manage highway drainage.

17.2. The schemes will be subject to agreements with Network Rail, Transport for Greater Manchester and Department for Transport these will be subject to consideration by the legal team.

18. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

18.1. There is no expected human resource impact.

19. EQUALITIES IMPACT

19.1. There is no expected equalities impact from this type of work although related equality assessments may need to be undertaken for specific projects.

20. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

20.1. Related environmental assessments may need to be undertaken for specific projects. The proposed approach to flood mitigation may provide additional biodiversity, improved water quality and local environmental improvements and supports Climate Action Now priorities.

21. RECOMMENDATION

21.1. Scrutiny is requested to note the work undertaken to improve flood resilience in Stockport and support the continued partnership working and investment in these area.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Jamie Birtles, Sue Stevenson on Tel: 07356 120 423, Tel: 0161-474-4351 or by email on jamie.birtles@stockport.gov.uk, sue.stevenson@stockport.gov.uk